

Safe Children's Products Act: Ensuring a Right-to-Know About Toxic Chemicals in Toys



Michigan Network for
**CHILDREN'S
Environmental
HEALTH**

Exposure to even small amounts of a toxic chemical can impact a child's ability to reach his or her full potential. The Safe Children's Products Act would help protect children and would inform parents and other consumers about chemicals of highest concern in toys and other children's products.

MICHIGAN'S CHILDREN AT RISK CHEMICAL EXPOSURE IS WIDESPREAD

- **Toxic chemicals are present** in the Great Lakes fish and the environment, and in house dust, homes, our own bodies, and breast milk as well as in toys and other children's products.¹
- **Children are more vulnerable to health effects from toxic chemicals** since their systems are still developing & because pound for pound, they eat, drink, and breathe about two and a half times more than adults.² They also place objects and their hands directly into their mouths, assuring they ingest more contaminants.

CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS MAY CONTAIN TOXIC CHEMICALS

- **Arsenic exposure** is associated with lower IQ scores in school-aged children. Prenatal and early childhood exposures to arsenic can also increase the risk of lung cancer and respiratory disease in later life.³ Arsenic was detected in approximately 1.4% of children's products surveyed by HealthyToys.org. in 2008.⁴
- **Lead exposure** can result in IQ deficits, learning disabilities, behavioral problems, stunted or slowed growth, and impaired hearing. At increasingly high levels of exposure, a child may suffer kidney damage, become mentally retarded, or fall into a coma.⁵ Lead was found in approximately 20% of children's products surveyed by HealthyToys.org in 2008.⁴
- **Mercury exposure** is toxic to the nervous system and can have detrimental affects on the kidneys.⁶ Mercury was detected in 1% of children's products surveyed by Healthytoys.org in 2008.⁴

Dangers of lead and arsenic poisoning

Arsenic poisoning

Nerve damage

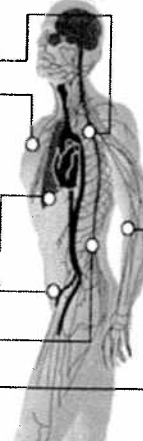
Skin damage:

- Hyperkeratosis (scaling skin)
- Pigment changes

Increased cancer risk:

- Lung
- Bladder
- Kidney and liver cancers

Circulatory problems in skin



Lead poisoning

High levels of lead

- Mental retardation, coma, convulsions and death

Low levels of lead

- Reduced IQ and attention span, impaired growth, reading and learning disabilities, hearing loss and a range of other health and behavioral effects.

Sources: Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning and news wires

The Denver Post

- **Bisphenol-A** is the main ingredient in hard polycarbonate plastics found in some baby bottles, drinking water bottles, and food containers, and one of the "top 50 production-volume chemicals in the U.S."⁷ In experiments with female mice, bisphenol-A has been found to induce the genetic defect that causes **Down's syndrome**, at levels comparable to those found in women tested to date.⁷
- In general, the increased presence of toxic chemicals has been linked with **increased incidence rates of a wide range of children's health and developmental issues**, including asthma and autism.⁷
- **There is no reason for "toxic toys"**. The same products can and often are made without potentially harmful chemicals.

OUR FEDERAL CHEMICAL PROTECTION SYSTEM IS BROKEN

- Over three decades ago, Congress passed the **Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA)** to authorize the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to control chemicals that pose an unreasonable risk to human health or the environment.⁹ Currently, there are at least 80,000 chemical compounds registered for commercial use in the United States; 62,000 chemicals were grandfathered under TSCA without mandatory testing. **About 2,000 new compounds that may pose hazards to human health are introduced into commercial use each year.**¹⁰ Traditional toxicologic methods cannot characterize and define the toxicity of such a large number of compounds in a cost-efficient and timely manner.¹¹ Under TSCA, the EPA has required testing on **fewer than 200 chemicals and restricted only 5 chemicals** in commerce.¹⁰
- The **U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO)**, the investigative arm of Congress, has found that **TSCA is inadequate.**¹²
- In August 2008, former President Bush signed the **Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA)**, which establishes the first federal restrictions on toxics in children's products and addresses only two chemicals, lead and phthalates. Please see our fact sheet, "Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008."

OTHER STATES AND COUNTRIES ARE LEADING THE WAY

- **Washington, Maine, and California** have laws stronger than the proposed Michigan Safe Children's Products Act.^{13, 14, 15} Many other states are poised to take strong action as well.
- The European Union adopted **Registration, Evaluation, and Authorization of Chemicals (REACH)**, which vastly increases the amount of information available to determine the safety of chemical products.¹⁶



MICHIGAN'S SAFE CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS ACT (HB 4763-4769) TAKES A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

- Requires the state by 2011 to create and regularly update a **comprehensive list of chemicals of concern** known to cause **cancer, reproductive or developmental harm, neurotoxicity, hormone disruption, or other toxicity**, or which are **persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic**, based on published government lists and other existing sources of data.
- From this initial list, authoritative sources will select by 2012 and regularly update "**chemicals of highest concern**" based on their use in children's products, presence in children, household dust, human breast milk or cord blood, or other specific relevance to the health of Michigan's children.

ENSURES A PARENT'S RIGHT TO KNOW AND TRANSPARENCY

- Large manufacturers of children's products that contain "chemicals of highest concern" above a threshold level **must publicly identify what products contain what chemicals and in what amounts.** The Michigan Department of Community Health must **make this information easily accessible.**
- Manufacturers must publicly report whether Screening Information Data Set or equivalent information exists for all chemicals in their children's product sold in Michigan.
- **There are no requirements for retailers, small manufacturers, or industrial users.**

ENCOURAGES GREEN JOBS

- Authorizes Michigan to participate in an **interstate clearinghouse** to share information and promote safer alternatives.
- Companion legislation incentivizes creating safer alternatives in Michigan through **Green Chemistry.**

***Please Support the Michigan
Safe Children's Products Act
(HB 4763-4769)!***

HOUSE MEMBERS WHO SIGNED THE HEALTHY MICHIGAN, HEALTHY KIDS PLATFORM AS CANDIDATES IN 2008

HD 1 - Timothy Bledsoe	HD 62 - Kate Segal
HD 4 - Coleman A. Young	HD 65 - Mike Simpson
HD 5 - Bert Johnson	HD 66 - Bill Rogers
HD 8 - George Cushingberry	HD 67 - Barb Byrum
HD 10 - Gabe Leland	HD 68 - Joan Bauer
HD 12 - Rashida Tlaib	HD 69 - Mark S. Meadows
HD 15 - Gino H. Polidori	HD 70 - Mike Huckleberry
HD 16 - Bob Constan	HD 71 - Rick Jones
HD 20 - Marc R. Corriveau	HD 74 - Dave Agema
HD 21 - Dian Slavens	HD 75 - Robert Dean
HD 23 - Deb Kennedy	HD 76 - Roy Schmidt
HD 24 - Sarah Roberts	HD 79 - John Proos
HD 26 - Marie Donigan	HD 84 - Terry L. Brown
HD 27 - Ellen Cogen Lipton	HD 85 - Richard J. Ball
HD 29 - Tim Melton	HD 87 - Brian N. Calley
HD 31 - Fred Miller	HD 88 - Bob Genetski
HD 32 - Jennifer Haase	HD 90 - Joseph Haveman
HD 34 - Woodrow Stanley	HD 91 - Mary Valentine
HD 37 - Vicki Barnett	HD 93 - Paul E. Opsommer
HD 39 - Lisa Brown	HD 95 - Andy Coulouris
HD 49 - Lee Gonzales	HD 96 - Jeff Mayes
HD 52 - Pam Byrnes	HD 99 - Bill Caul
HD 53 - Rebekah Warren	HD 101 - Dan Scripps
HD 54 - Alma Wheeler Smith	HD 103 - Joel A. Sheltroun
HD 55 - Kathy Angerer	HD 107 - Gary McDowell
HD 59 - Matt Lori	HD 109 - Steven W. Lindberg
HD 60 - Robert B. Jones	HD 110 - Michael A. Lahti

***The Safe Children's Product Act is based on the
Healthy Michigan, Healthy Kids platform***

MEMBERS OF MICHIGAN NETWORK FOR CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

- * American Academy of Pediatrics
(Michigan Chapter)
- * Arab Community Center for Economic and
Social Services (ACCESS)
- * Association for Children's Mental Health
- * Autism Society of Michigan
- * Citizens for Alternatives to Chemical
Contamination
- * Clean Water Fund
- * Clinton County Family Resource Center
- * Detroiters Working for Environmental
Justice
- * East Michigan Environmental Action
Council
- * Ecology Center
- * Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan
- * Learning Disabilities Association (LDA) of
Michigan
- * Local Motion
- * Michigan Coalition for Children and
Families
- * Michigan Environmental Council
- * Michigan League of Conservation Voters
Education Fund
- * Michigan Nurses Association
- * Science and Environmental Health
Network
- * Voices for Earth Justice

References:

1. The Learning Disabilities Association of Canada. Understanding and Preventing Environmental Hazards to Child Health and Development. Published by Canadian Child Care Federation in the Linking Research to Practice: Second Canadian Forum Proceedings Report. November 1999. Accessed on 3-5-08 at: http://www.ldac-taac.ca/Environment/article_hazards-e.asp
2. Steingraber S. Living downstream: An ecologist looks at cancer and the environment. Reading, MA; Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc, 1997.
3. Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Arsenic Fact-sheet. 2007. Accessed 3-5-08 at: <http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/eh/ChemFS/fs/arsenic.htm>.
4. HealthyToys.org. Findings. Accessed 3-19-09 at: <http://www.healthytoys.org/about.findings.php>.
5. National Safety Council. Health Effects on Children. 2009. Accessed 3-5-09 at: http://www.nsc.org/resources/issues/articles/health_effects.aspx.
6. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Mercury: Methylmercury Effects. February 2009. Accessed on 3-8-09 at: <http://www.epa.gov/mercury/effects.htm>
7. Environment California. Environmental Health Reports. Growing Up Toxic: Chemical Exposures and Increases in Developmental Disease. June 23, 2004. Accessed 3-5-08 at: <http://www.environmentcalifornia.org/reports/environmental-health/environmental-health-reports/growing-up-toxic-chemical-exposures-and-increases-in-developmental-disease>
8. Healthandenergy.org. Accessed on 3-19-09 at: http://healthandenergy.com/images/lead_arsenic_poisoning.gif.
9. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Summary of Toxic Substances Control Act. 19 February 2009. Accessed on 3-8-09 at: <http://www.epa.gov/lawsregs/laws/tsca.html>.
10. Wilson PM, Chia DA, Ehlers BC. 2006. Green Chemistry in California: A Framework for Leadership in Chemicals Policy and Innovation. California Policy Research Center. Prepared for: The California Senate Environmental Quality Committee and The California Assembly Committee on Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials.
11. Compound Cytotoxicity Profiling Using Quantitative High-Throughput Screening. Environmental Health Perspectives. Accessed on 3-17-09 at: <http://www.mnceh.org/campaigns.lead.php>.
12. Trager, Rebecca. "EPA's chemical evaluation process 'high risk'." Advancing the Chemical Sciences. 29 January 2009. Accessed on 3-8-09 at: <http://www.rsc.org/chemistry-world/News/2009/January/29010901.asp>.
13. Washington Toxics Coalition. New Federal Safety Standards Based on Standards First Developed in Washington. 30 July 2008. Accessed on 3-8-09 at: <http://www.watoxics.org/pressroom/press-releases/new-federal-toy-safety-standards-based-on-standards-first-developed-in-washington>.
14. Protecting Children from Toxics. Natural Resources Council of Maine. 2008 Report for Maine's Environment. Accessed on 3-21-09 at: http://www.nrcm.org/2008_report_card.asp#toxics.
15. Governor Signs Bill to Protect Kids from Toxic Toys. California Environmental Health News. 15 October 2007. Accessed on 3-21-09 at: <http://www.environmentcalifornia.org/newsroom/environmental-health/environmental-health/governor-signs-bill-to-protect-kids-from-toxic-toys>.
16. European Chemicals Agency. What is REACH? European Commission. Accessed on 3-8-09 at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/chemicals/reach/reach_intro.htm.

Bolding was added by the Michigan Network for Children's Environmental Health.

Our Mission: Through education, outreach, and advocacy, we seek to protect Michigan's children from adverse impacts caused by exposure to widespread hazardous chemicals.

For more information, contact Mike Shriberg, Ph.D., Ecology Center Policy Director, at 734-761-3186 ext. 108 or Gen Howe, MPH, Environmental Health Campaign Director, at 734-761-3186 ext. 115.